

T H E
Catholic Protestant,
P A R T II.
THE PERIL OF
HELL-FIRE INCURRED
B Y
DENOUNCING IT.

A
Popular and Critical Discourse on Matt. v. 22,

ADDRESSED,
In the Spirit of FRIENDSHIP and CHARITY,
As well to the READERS and ABETTORS of
what is commonly called

T H E
CREED of St. ATHANASIUS, at large,
AS TO THE
Members of the Church of ROME, in particular.

By R. HARRISON, M. A.

*The Account given of Athanasius's Creed seems to me no-wise
satisfactory, I wish we were well rid of it.*

Abp. Tillotson's Letter to Bp. Burnet.
See Birch's Life of Tillotson, p. 343.

*Judge not, that ye be not judged: For with what Judgement
ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what Measure ye
mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest
thou the Mote that is in thy Brother's Eye, but considerest
not the Beam that is in thine own Eye? Or how wilt thou say
to thy Brother, Let me pull out the Mote out of thine Eye;
and behold a Beam is in thine own Eye? Thou Hypocrite, first
cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye; and then shalt thou
see clearly to cast out the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye.*

MATT. vii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

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T H E

CATHOLIC PROTESTANT.

MATT. v. 22:

BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT WHOSO-
EVER IS ANGRY WITH HIS BROTHER
WITHOUT A CAUSE, SHALL BE IN
DANGER OF THE JUDGMENT: AND
WHOSOEVER SHALL SAY TO HIS BRO-
THER, RACA, SHALL BE IN DANGER
OF THE COUNCIL: (and then follow the
words that bespeak our particular notice,
and claim the most serious discussion)
BUT WHOSOEVER SHALL SAY, *Thou
Fool*, SHALL BE IN DANGER OF HELL
FIRE.

IN order to shew the right and good
design of the best preacher and pattern
of righteousness in this his weighty
and solemn declaration, with the truth
and moment of the arguments it will sug-
gest, together with many safe and wise
conclusions we shall recommend to the
application of this christian audience, we
undertake to make it plain to your com-
mon discernment.

A

I. That

I. That the mind and will of Christ is not rightly expressed, nor can it be learned from the words now read.

II. That the appellation, *Thou Fool*, in the English Bible must, of necessity, be read, "Thou Reprobate or Apostate," before it can convey the true sense or be made to accord with the evangelist Matthew's expression, in his original scripture. And, in the third place,

III. We would expose the nature of this mischievous vice and daring impiety, by pointing out various ways and degrees wherein it has been, and may be, practised; and our careful discussion of these articles may answer, we trust, with God's blessing, the great and good ends to which they are designed to lead the judgment, tempers, and practice of this Christian audience.

I. We are to make it plain to your common discernment, that the mind and will of our Lord is not rightly expressed, nor can be learned from the words in our text, as they stand in the English translation.

Should

Should we never be able to discover the nature and guilt of that particular crime, against which Christ in our text cautions, in the most solemn manner, his disciples; yet no man, who duly weighs the case itself, can be at a loss to know that he may often call his brother *Fool* with harmless effect, nay with a design both innocent and charitable.

Thou Fool! is an appellation vulgarly used, and understood in our mother tongue to denote a weak or ignorant character; and when sometimes applied in a more large and important sense, to express our apprehension of the imprudence or our charitable resentment of the sinful conduct of our brethren: I hope the Christian Religion (which indeed justly condemns all rash judgment and malicious censures) may yet allow us to mention men's real characters as they severally appear to our minds on fair evidence and proper occasions; nor forbids us to give a bad man his right name whenever we take this useful freedom with a true desire of making him hereby more sensible of his folly, and better disposed to correct it.

The veneration we owe, and the esteem in which we confessedly hold, the all-wise and beneficent character of the deputed Lord and Saviour of the world, forbid our unworthy suspicion, that the obvious and requisite sense of the words read in the English version of our text could be his meaning, or proceed from his mouth who spake on all occasions, and in the confession of his very enemies, as never man had spoken before him.

Yes, the perfect benevolence of Jesus Christ may well assure us, he has not pronounced any man in danger of the forest punishment upon any account, that is in itself innocent, and in its design and consequence may prove useful.

But that a Christian may say to his brother, *Thou Fool!* without making himself hereby obnoxious to hell fire, is moreover determined effectually, and justified by his own example, who did no sin, and in whose mouth was no guile, as by the practice likewise of his holy apostles, whose example it is unquestionably lawful and safe for us in this case to follow.

St. James, in the 2d chap. and 20th ver. of his epistle, takes occasion to call him *κενὴς*, a vain, or, as it might have been as fitly translated, a foolish man, who looks to be *finally* saved by faith alone; not indeed in any contradiction to the sense of his brother apostle Paul, when arguing with judaizing teachers, he claims and justifies the right of converted Gentiles to partake in common with these ungenerous Hebrews, of all the means and privileges of the gospel-salvation, by their faith alone, i. e. without their being circumcised after the manner of Moses, &c. but not without their due performance of the express terms, and their acquisition of the requisite qualifications, of their present justification and final acceptance with God, viz. their repentance from dead works, their uniform obedience to the laws, and prevalent conformity to the temper and life of Christ, who was sent, and came down from heaven on purpose to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

How could this good apostle better express his wisdom or charity, than in telling us roundly what miserable fools we are, and must needs be, in neglecting reformation, and that purity of mind and behaviour

viour the gospel so loudly demands of all its professors, as the very condition without which no man shall be admitted into the kingdom of glory, or can be qualified to enjoy its pure and undefiled rewards.

In like manner, and for the same reason, St. Paul's address to his converts appears in the same stile, "O foolish Galatians," in the 1st verse of his 3d chapter to them,

Nay, Christ himself, the Son and Wisdom of God; and by far the most innocent best good man that ever lived, bestows the epithets Fools and Blind upon the Pharisees, when rebuking their abominable hypocrisy, Matt. xxiii. 17. As his tenderness and great good-will to his own disciples are also expressed in the very same language, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," Luke xxiv. 25. Whatever then may have been our Lord's intention and precise meaning in this passage of his famous sermon to the multitude, who flocked around him as he sat on the mount, we are now convinced, and satisfied, I hope, with Reason and Truth, it cannot be that presented in the English Bible, this prohibition being inadmissible, as totally incompatible with the

the equity of the case itself, and remarkably confronted, you see, by the authority and examples as well of Christ himself as of his holy apostles.

And truly the ground of our satisfaction in this case had need be most clear and firm, to relieve the mind of the very best and meekest Christian from the distressing apprehensions of this mistaken guilt and perpetual danger; for who among us can truly declare, he has never said to his brother, *Thou Fool!*

We therefore hasten in the second place,

II. To prove this appellation, *Thou Fool*, in our English version, must be translated, "Thou Reprobate or Apostate," before it will convey its true sense, or can be made to accord with St. Matthew's expression in his original scripture.

The evidence and force of this proof we hope to give in such manner as may be level to the capacity and satisfaction of the unlearned hearer.

Our Lord's design in the context opens at the 20th verse, with his address to that
vast

vast concourse of Jews who heard him on the mount.

“ For I say unto you, except your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The great error in the doctrine and practice of the Pharisees was, the regard they paid to the ritual in preference to the moral law of Moses, and their resting in the letter, without due inquiry or regard to the spirit and effect of the law. On this double account Christ tells the multitude openly, Ye cannot be fit subjects of the kingdom of heaven, I am sent to publish in my Father’s name, and to establish by his authority, if you obey not cordially those immutable moral laws Jehovah spake to your fathers, and has recorded through all your generations by the hand of his servant Moses.

The perpetual obligation of these moral commands of God, “ I am not come to abolish, says his Son, but to fulfil them in another and better manner than as they are now taught or practised by your Scribes and Pharisees; not thinking as their corrupt doctrines and examples would tempt you

you to atone for the neglect and violation of some of God's commandments, by your scrupulous observance of the rest, not leaving undone the weightier matters of the Law, Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness, making void these indispensable precepts of your Maker through their traditions.

These universal duties men must at all times perform, not according to the letter only of the divine law, but especially in their spiritual sense, so as to guard and cleanse the heart from evil concupiscence and bad designs that defile a man, from whence proceed, in the eye and judgment of God, the guilt and injury of every evil work:

The integrity and wisdom of the best Preacher and Pattern of Righteousness, are conspicuous in his enumeration of the bad principles and designs that are the source and instigation of actual wickedness; which being justly accounted, in the sight of God, violations of his moral law, the purification of the heart from these hidden seeds of corruption, must not be deemed less requisite than men's abstinence from the visible fruits of iniquity, before they

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can be duly prepared to enter into the kingdom of God, set up and established in the world by the doctrine and authority of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Scribes and Pharisees having conceived the prohibition of God's law confined to the sinful act, but not to reach the temper and purpose of the mind; these blind guides had taught the people to believe the sixth commandment, delivered to their fathers of old from mount Sinai, had no farther intention than to forbid actual murder; to correct this dangerous mistake our Lord declares, on the authority and credentials of his mission, the true meaning and extent of this divine command, as we read in the 21st and 22d verses.

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, that whosoever shall be angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, RACA, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, *Thou Fool*, shall be in danger of hell fire.”

The

The best preacher of righteousness designing, in this whole passage, to teach his hearers that greater degrees of guilt will, without repentance, be followed with greater measures of punishment in the world to come, refers the Jews, for the equity and illustration of his doctrine, to the well-known process and executions established in their courts of justice; clearly to understand which we must first be informed, they had an inferior court of twenty-three judges, * before whom even capital offences were sometimes brought, and a malefactor, in consequence of their sentence, might, in the highest instance, be strangled or beheaded. This was called the Judgment.

Another, named the Council, was the Jewish Sanhedrim, their national and supreme court, consisting of seventy-three judges, by whom crimes of the highest degree were tried, and punished by their sentence *only* with stoning, a death, in the

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sufferer's

* It is very likely the particular number might be left to discretion, as no number was fixed by law, though the courts themselves were appointed expressly; they might therefore be more or fewer in number, as the administration of justice should require. Thus, in the later times of the Hebrew government, the number three in lesser towns, and of twenty-three in greater cities might become fixed by custom and length of time.

Lowman's Civil Government of the Hebrews, p. 65.

sufferer's apprehension, more terrible than the former. *Christ. Mag.* vol. I. p. 175.

The punishment last-mentioned in our text, and translated *Hell Fire*, is in the original Gehenna of Fire, which Gehenna, or Valley of Hinnom, was near Jerusalem, where, in idolatrous times, children are reported to have been burnt alive in sacrifice to their idol god Moloch, but it was now made a receptacle for carcases of animals and other nuisances of the city, where continual fires were kept to consume them.

With respect, therefore, both to its former and present use, this accursed and horrible place seems chosen by the wisdom of Christ as a fit emblem of hell, signifying to the Jews a degree of *future* punishment as much more dreadful than those mentioned before in our text, as *burning alive* was more terrible than stoning, beheading, or strangling. This exposition of the gradation of crimes and punishments observed by the Jews in their several courts of justice, prepares us to apprehend the nature and malignity of the crime for which the offender is exposed to the danger of hell fire, announced in the text by
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the peremptory sentence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It has been a common opinion among learned men, that the Evangelist Matthew wrote his gospel for the particular use and advantage of the Jews, his countrymen, in their mother tongue; when his Hebrew gospel came afterwards to be translated into Greek, a language at that time in general use, understood by people of many nations, and consequently better adapted for the wide and speedy propagation of the history and faith of Jesus Christ among the Gentiles, these Greek translators of Matthew's Hebrew gospel thought fit to take into their copies the word RACA, a term of bitter reproach among the Jews in the manner it stands to this day untranslated in the English Bible also.

The other more wicked appellation, against which our Lord expressly denounceth the peril of hell fire, might, for the like reason, have been retained in the Hebrew character, if this expectation had not been prevented (as it seems to us) by an innocent mistake, and this very remarkable accident, the word MOREH is
com-

common to both languages, and almost exactly of the same letter and sound in Hebrew as in the Greek *.

From the Greek indeed it is rightly translated in our English version, *Thou Fool!* But in Hebrew it bears a different sense, and of far greater moment, to which we bespeak your notice and judgment, as you find it expressed in four passages of our

* The serious reader of this discourse will attend to the evidence therein produced, in confirmation of the following curious, learned, and very probable conjecture: "Interpreters have here, with one consent, so cited the Greek word *Μωρῆς*, Matt. v. 22. that it may seem absurd to call it in question: yet it cannot but seem an odd expression, when a Syriac word had just before been named, and there seems to be very little difference between calling a man *RACA*, empty fellow, and *μωρῆς*, foolish.

"There is not that scale in the crime as in the punishment; and, consequently, one may justly suspect that there has been some mistake.

I must add further, that *RACA* is more than empty; and Dr. Lightfoot has produced several instances, where *RACA* signifies the most sovereign contempt, like *Scoundrel*, *Rascal*. Now does the word *Μωρῆς*, in Greek, any where signify so much, I will not say more or worse than *RACA*?

"He might well therefore ask, *Quidnam queso gravius in vocabulo μωρῆς quam in vocabulo RACA?* What is there worse in the word *Μωρῆς*, thou fool, than in the word *RACA*?

"If one might be allowed to conjecture in such a case as this, I should be inclined to think that *μωρῆς* is not a Greek word, but is the same language with *RACA*, and should not be interpreted at all any more than *RACA*; or at least should not be interpreted from the Greek word *Μωρῆς*, thou fool, but from what *Μωρῆς* signifies in Hebrew.

our English version of the Hebrew Bible. Moses denotes by this term, *A rebellious Son*, Deut. xxi. 18. "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son, who will not obey the voice of his father."

The same word is used by David to characterise, in the same sense, a stubborn and rebellious generation. Psalm lxxviii. 8.

So likewise it is used by the Prophet, "This people hath a rebellious and revolting heart: they are revolted and gone."

Jer. v. 23. The Hebrew word *Morim* is

"I should guess מורִי to be the same word which is used, Deut. xxi. 18. "If a man has a stubborn (מוריה) and rebellious son, who will not obey the voice of his father." So again, Ps. lxxviii. 8. "A stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God." So likewise in Jerem. v. 23. "This people hath a rebellious and revolting (MORAH) heart, they are revolted and gone." Again, Num. xx. 10. in the same sense, "Hear now ye rebels, MORIM."

"If this then be the meaning of the word MORAH, the sense is plain: Whosoever shall be angry with his brother, shall give an account to God for it, and shall suffer for it: Whosoever shall treat his Brother with contempt, and use him as a scoundrel, he shall be treated hereafter with a punishment proportionable, not to what the council of three inflicts, but to what the greater council inflicts: But whosoever shall still use his brother worse, and call him MORE, Rebel, Apostate, (for embracing my doctrine, or for any such like occasion) shall be in danger of hell fire."

"This (says the liberal and learned author) I offer as a conjecture at a place which interpreters have not sufficiently considered, and have too much been distressed about."

Sykes's Com. of Nat. and Rev. Relig. p. 425—427.

is again used by Moses in the same sense, in his Book of Numbers xx. 10. "Hear now, ye rebels."

This signification, as derived from the Syriac *Marab*, shews the force, and fills up the climax of our Lord's address in the text, shewing the several gradations of crimes and punishments expressed in the 21st and 22d verses, to have been intelligible to the Jews his hearers, in the sense following :

Whoever is angry with his brother without just and necessary cause, however he may escape the cognizance of human judicature, shall yet be in danger of the judgment of God, the inspector of his heart, the consequent witness and judge of causeless anger, and his indulgence of malevolent passions, that in various ways instigate bad men to hurt their innocent brethren, but when suffered to swell to their utmost degree of virulence, will not spare the very lives of their fellow-creatures; for which reason he who hateth his brother is, by the Apostle, pronounced a murderer. 1 John iii. 15.

Whoever,

Whoever, inflated with causeless anger, breaks forth in wrathful expressions against his brother, calling him RACA, a term of bitter reproach in the Syriac language, and consequently a fomenter of strife, and forerunner of murder, makes himself obnoxious to an higher tribunal, like to that of your own council, faith Christ to the Jews.

But whoever shall use his brother still worse, calling him (*Moreh!*) a rebel to God, or an apostate from true Religion; whoever dares thus to stigmatize his brother, professing his belief of the same venerable authority, his reverence for the government and love of the word of his Maker, no less than the slanderer himself, by whom he is thus injuriously defamed and persecuted, maketh himself hereby obnoxious to the sentence pronounced in the text by our common Lord and Judge, even to a danger no less formidable than that of Hell Fire. For the prevention and cure of which daring impiety, we bespeak your due and salutary attention to the next topic of our discourse, under which we proposed to forewarn our Christian brethren of the mischiefs and peril of this enormous sin, by pointing out the various

ways and degrees wherein it has been, and may be practised.

This may soon appear to their clear discernment and satisfaction, who bear in mind that the Jews, to whom Christ addressed his sermon on the Mount, were *all brethren* in a figurative moral relation, more particular and important than that by which every man is a brother to his fellow-creature.

They were all chosen of God for his peculiar covenant-people, and, in consequence of this spiritual relation, were styled his children, favoured with particular revelations of his will, and under the immediate patronage and guidance of his marvellous providence.

Their moral guilt and impenitence, or prevalent reformation and obedience, would indeed affect the state of individuals, as to their final acceptance or rejection by God in the world to come; nevertheless in the present life the Jews were at this time all partakers of the privileges of God's elect people, and claimed the respect and affection of all their brethren in this same peculiar relation, excepting only when

when they should any of them blaspheme the God of Israel, and until they revolted openly to idolatry.

In like manner, whoever, under the more excellent and gracious dispensation of the gospel, shall confess Jesus to be the Christ, is affirmed by the apostle to be borne of God, 1 John v. 1. i. e. He becomes, by this confession of his faith, a child of God, one of his chosen covenant-ed people, under the better dispensation of the New Testament, as the whole nation of the Jews were so under the Old,

Every such avowed believer confesseth the divine mission, and consequent authority of the Christian Lawgiver, taking his gospel for the rule of his faith and obedience.

Every believer, by virtue of this his Christian profession, is intitled to all external privileges, as he is subject also to every consequent duty of the gospel-covenant, which God the Father Almighty has condescended to publish to the world by his Son Jesus Christ, with the ratification of his precious blood, by the power of his well-attested resurrection, and the glorious

demonstration of his visible ascension to heaven.

How far, or how well each nominal Christian performs his proper duty in this great and common relation, is the prerogative of God our maker and judge to determine, who, by Jesus Christ, will judge the secrets of men according to his gospel, whereof he has given assurance by raising him from the dead.

We, in the mean-time, are required by every principle of reason, humanity, and charity, as by frequent peremptory demands of the Christian Religion, to own and embrace, as Christian Brethren, all persons who call Jesus their Lord and Master, professing their hearty assent to the word of God, with their consequent duty and full purpose to walk in every *known* ordinance and command of their Lord blameless; who make the same short but full confession of their faith, that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah of God, which, in the first ages of Christianity, did in fact introduce men to fellowship with apostles, and, thro' their ministry, to the various gifts of the Holy Spirit, as the whole tenor of their history and their marvellous ministrations abundantly

dantly declare, Acts viii. 14—17. Acts xix. 6. Rom. i. 11, &c. not assuming the dominion of any man's faith or conscience, which we have evidently no right to demand, nor capacity to execute; not daring to judge our brother, or set at nought our brother; but leaving every man to stand or fall to his own master; believing that we ourselves must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; and not forgetting what he, for this very purpose, has himself told us, Matt. xviii. 6. "Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, who believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone was hung about his neck, and that he was drowned in the depth of the sea," remembering, especially, the evidence and force of the exposition now given of this more striking sentence denounced by our Lord and Judge to his Jewish audience: "But I say unto you, Whosoever shall say to his brother, *Thou Apostate*, shall be in danger of hell fire." *

There are, in general, two ways in which this great injury may be done to our Christian brother,

i. If

* N. B. If any doubt or objection remains to this new version, at least the truth and importance of the sentiment it expresseth, seems sufficiently established by our Lord's similar sentence in Matthew xviii. 6.

1. If any man is pronouced an Infidel, or slandered as an Apostate from the Christian Faith, who, on the contrary, and at the same time, persists in the profession of his faith and hope in the gospel-covenant,

2. When any professed Christian is treated by his brethren in a manner more barbarous and unjust than any declared infidel ought to be used, either by taking from him the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, or by causing him to bear the scandal and various cruelties of persecution, merely on account of his peaceable and conscientious use of this his Christian liberty.

In either of these cases, the offender, alas! too plainly makes himself obnoxious to the danger of hell fire, by the peremptory sentence of Jesus Christ our common Lord and Judge.

But mistaken or guilty as the conduct of others may be in this case, however they may delude themselves with their apprehension of doing good service to God, by hating, scandalizing, and tearing asunder many of the living members of the body of Christ, may we ever tremble at the

the thought of exposing ourselves to the *real* danger of hell fire, by denouncing it rashly and vainly against our Christian brother! Let us not dare thus to usurp and abuse the prerogative of the Christian Law-giver, so as to stigmatize with the character of reprobation, or shut out from the privilege and communion of the Christian Church, any disciple confessing his hearty belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, merely on the score of his real or supposed ignorance, his involuntary mistake, or innocent error in any other matter.

This hateful work may we ever leave to those who want sense, prudence, or due consideration to discover its antichristian influence; while in the mean-time we, as becometh Catholic Christians, truly deplore the peril and mischiefs of their blind zeal, putting the best and most favourable construction upon their intention, making them peculiar objects of our charitable prayers*, and leaving the innocence or guilt of their conduct to the all-righteous and merciful Judge, who always marks
and

* Among believers, calling Jesus their Lord and common Master, not those who agree, but differ in other theological speculations, are proper objects of mutual forbearance, and that charity St. Paul has pronounced greater than faith and hope. 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

and infallibly knows it; nor let us ever withhold from them the assistance of better information, so far as we can find fit opportunity to give, and they have patience and wisdom to receive it.

Above all, may we religiously shun the danger and mischiefs of their unhappy examples, counteracting them as far as we can, in conformity to the common dictates of reason, humanity, and the whole spirit and letter of the best-natured institution of religion in the world, by following the apostle's good advice to his converts at Philippi, iv. 5. "Let your moderation be known unto all men;" embracing all persons as fit objects of our Christian affection and communion, who give evidence to believe, or any good presumption to hope, that they believe in and love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; who, however they may in the mean-time be grievously injured by hasty censures or severer treatment of deluded bigots, are insured of the friendship, and will be honoured with the final acceptance of the Father of mercies, who then will reward them openly in proportion to the integrity of their faith, profession, and prevalent obedience to the gospel of his Son; who knowing how to have

have compassion on the ignorant, and for them that are out of the way, thus pitied and prayed for his very betrayers and murderers, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do;" and at the last great day will accept every willing mind, according to the use and improvement made of what a man has, but not of what he has not, of which the apostle's declaration gives full assurance of faith. 2 Cor. viii, 12.

These rules and duties of Christian affection and fellowship are requisite, and evidently well calculated to promote that good harmony, friendship, and mutual improvement prescribed in the letter, and by the whole Catholic Spirit of the Christian Religion.

Here we plainly see the true centre wherein all persons avowing their hearty belief that Jesus is the Christ, both may and should be united, being declared, on account of this very confession of their faith, to be all born of God, 1 John v. 1. A phrase (in the current stile and sense of the New Testament) denoting all such professed believers for brethren, in the best possible relation of sons or heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ their elder
D brother :

brother: For to as many as received him, (writes the same beloved apostle in his gospel) to them gave he power, or a right and title to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name, John i. 12.

Whoever considers duly the close connection these evangelic rules have with the charity that believeth all things, that hopeth all things, and, by good St. Paul, is affirmed greater than faith and hope, and, consequently, the cardinal virtue of our excellent divine religion; he that ponders well this inseparable connection, must needs confess these scripture rules an honourable distinction, the ornament and felicity of every private Christian and public community, who closely and religiously follow them.

Nor is the wisdom, prudence, or charity of the common Author and Finisher of our faith less admirable and conspicuous in employing the weight of his authority, and denouncing the most formidable sanction of his gospel, thus to guard the common liberty and peace of his disciples, to save us all as far as possible from the guilt

guilt and oppressions of a censorious, intolerant, and persecuting spirit.

Finally, may these tremendous words of Majesty and Grace, this salutary sentence of Christ our common Lawgiver, Saviour, and Judge, produce its kind design and happy effect, by living in our remembrance, and sinking deep into all our hearts. Whosoever shall say to his *brother*, "Thou Reprobate or Apostate, abandoned from the hope, and cast out of the Christian Covenant;" every such self-contracted, censorious, dogmatical Christian exposeth himself by the express sentence of our Lord in the Hebrew text, to a danger no less formidable than that of hell fire.

From the malignity, mischiefs, and peril of this enormous sin, may the Father of mercies, and the God of all our hope and consolation, speedily reform and effectually preserve the whole Christian Community.
Amen.

P R A Y E R

F O R T H E

Cultivation and Increase of mutual TOLERATION, Catholic COMMUNION, and universal CHARITY.

O GOD the Saviour of all men, especially of all those that believe*, accept, we beseech thee, our constant intercessions for the temporal, spiritual, and eternal happiness of all men; more especially we pray in behalf of the whole christian world, that it may please thee, by thy power and providence, to remove out of the way every thing that obstructs or hinders the further propagation of the knowledge and practice of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

May all who name the Name of Christ depart from iniquity, adorning their characters and profession by a conversation becoming the Gospel.

Thus may they recommend the purity and excellence of our holy religion to the belief

* God is the Saviour of all men, as he willeth the salvation of all, and accepteth every willing mind, according to the use and improvement made of what a man hath, and not of what he hath not. 1 Tim. iv. 10. 2 Cor. viii. 12.

belief and acceptance of infidels, while they find it the power of God to their own salvation.

We pray that the number of pious, virtuous, and beneficent Christians in each congregation of Christ's worshipping disciples, may continually increase, and that grace, mercy, and peace may be multiplied among all who love our common Lord and Saviour in sincerity, and take his Gospel for the guide of their faith and manners.

To all who suffer for Christ's sake, and the testimony of a good conscience, grant a suitable measure of faith and patience, a sanctified use of their present sufferings, and a joyful deliverance from the injuries and cruelty of persecution; may each spiritual tyrant be humbled, and all usurpation over the consciences of men expire in confusion.

Grant in particular, that all who call themselves Protestant Christians may be more distinguished by their righteousness, peace, and mutual forbearance. O thou God and Lover of peace, kindle among us, we beseech thee, a lasting flame of brotherly-kindness and universal charity;
and

and thus may we ever prove the sincerity and virtue of our reformation from Popery.

Finally, We pray that our attainments in the heavenly temper and divine life may correspond with our duty and advantages as Christians, that when Christ shall appear at the end of the world to reward his saints, and be admired of all who believe with the obedience of faith, we, thy servants may, be well prepared for the absolution and acceptance of our Judge; to meet our Great Judge in peace; to give a joyful account of our stewardship; and to enter in triumph into the everlasting kingdom of Glory, Honour, and Immortality, which to all patient continuers in well-doing is set open by our Lord Jesus Christ: Whom not seeing we love, and in whom, tho' now we see him not yet believing, we would rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. *Amen.*

28 SE60

“The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of his sheep, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty be with us, and rest upon us, now and always.” *Amen.*